



United States Attorney's Office  
District of Columbia

Jeffrey A. Taylor  
United States Attorney

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **District Man Sentenced to 30 Years in Prison for raping two women**

*--two assaults are linked by DNA data base and later tied to the suspect--*

WASHINGTON - A 43-year-old Northwest District of Columbia man, Ernest Thomas, was sentenced today in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia by the Honorable Frederick M. Weisberg to 360 months (30 years) in prison for sexually abusing two women in 2000 and 2005, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor announced.

The defendant will have to register as a sex offender for life. On January 9, 2009, a Superior Court jury found Thomas guilty of two counts of First Degree Sexual Abuse.

The evidence at trial established that on July 17, 2000, the defendant met the victim in Southeast (PSA 704) and suggested they smoke crack together. The victim agreed and went with the defendant to an abandoned building. Instead of producing the drugs, the defendant demanded sex from the victim. When the victim refused to have sex with the defendant, he began to strangle her and punched her. The victim reached for a knife from her pocket, but the defendant grabbed it from her and stabbed her in the arm and then raped her. The defendant ran out of the building and the victim never saw him again. The victim reported the rape to the police and a sexual assault examination was conducted on the victim.

More than five years later, on November 29, 2005, the defendant went to the second victim's apartment in Southwest (PSA 706) presumably looking for her friend. The victim allowed the defendant into her apartment while she looked for her friend's phone number. The defendant suddenly began strangling the victim and hit her. She tried to fight him off her, but he overpowered her and raped her. The victim reported the rape to the police and a sexual assault examination was conducted on the victim.

In April 2007, a DNA database "hit" linked both cases, but did not identify the assailant. In December 2007, the victim from the 2005 rape, saw the defendant and contacted the police. Subsequent DNA tests linked the defendant to both rapes.

In announcing today's sentence, U.S. Attorney Taylor commended lead Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Detective Wandella Fields, who did an exemplary job investigating the case and working with the victim and other witnesses. He also praised the outstanding assistance of MPD Detective Wallace Carmichael, Mobile Crime Officers Kemper Agee, Richard Griffin, Keith Slaughter, Officers Wen Ai, Calvin Branch, Thomas Crabb, Michael Iannacchione, and Sergeant Ronald Reid. He also praised the work of Paralegal Gena Johnson, Legal Assistant Tiffany Jones, Supervisory Criminal Investigator Chris Brophy, Intelligence Analysts Larry Grasso and Sharon Johnson and Janay Jones, Ron Royal, Tyrone Bowie, and Errol Spears from Litigation Services. Finally, U.S. Attorney Taylor expressed his appreciation to Victim/Witness Advocate Tracey Hawkins who worked closely with the victims, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Tracey Lankler, who investigated and prosecuted this case.

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